

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----107241 231220Z /15
O 231157Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4581
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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 02510

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

JERUSALEM FOR USDEL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP EG US (MAREI, SAYED)
SUBJECT: PROPOSED VISIT OF EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENTARY
DELEGATION TO U.S.

SUMMARY: SAYED MAREI, SPEAKER OF PEOPLES ASSEMBLY, ASKS ABOUT UTILITY OF A HIGH-LEVEL PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION, HEADED BY HIM, GOING TO THE U.S. EARLY FEBRUARY TO EXPLAIN EGYPTIAN POSITION AND PERHAPS ASSIST IN EFFORT HELP GET PEACE PROCESS STARTED AGAIN. SADAT WANTS MAREI TO GO. MAREI WOULD WANT SOME FORM OF A CONGRESSIONAL INVITATION AS COVER. HE ASKS FOR OUR REACTIONS. BELIEVE SUCH A VISIT BY A DELEGATION HEADED BY THE PRAGMATIC, ARTICULATE AND SENSIBLE MAREI COULD BE VERY USEFUL AT THIS CRITICAL TIME. END SUMMARY.

1. SAYED MAREI, THE SPEAKER OF THE PEOPLES ASSEMBLY, ASKED ME TO CALL, JANUARY 22. HE SAID HE WISHED TO EXPLORE SOMETHING WITH ME ON AN INFORMAL BASIS. PRESIDENT
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SADAT HAD THE PREVIOUS EVENING INSTRUCTED HIM TO LEAVE FOR THE UNITED STATES TODAY, ON ONE OF A SERIES OF MISSIONS SADAT IS SENDING TO VARIOUS AREAS, TO EXPLAIN THE EGYPTIAN POSITION IN THE WAKE OF THE SUSPENSION OF THE JERUSALEM TALKS. BESIDES HIMSELF, THE PROPOSED PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES WOULD CONSIST OF DR. GAMAL OTEIFI (FORMER DEPUTY SPEAKER AND NOW

CHAIRMAN OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE), DR. LEILA TAKLA (VICE CHAIRMAN OF PA FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE), FIKRI ABAZA (MEMBER), AND POSSIBLY ONE MEMBER FROM THE MISR PARTY. DELEGATION WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR ESMET ABDEL MEGUID (WHOSE IMMINENT RETURN TO U.S. IS ANNOUNCED IN PRESS TODAY), DR. BOUTROS GHALI (BUT NOT IN HIS CAPACITY AS MINSTATE) AND MFA UNDERSEC OSAMA AL-BAZ.

2. NOTING THE MANY CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATIONS THAT HE, PERSONALLY, HAS HOSTED HERE, MAREI SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO GO UNDER COVER OF SOME KIND OF A CONGRESSIONAL INVITATION. WHILE IN THE U.S., HE AND HIS GROUP WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH SENIOR WHITE HOUSE AND DEPT OFFICERS AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS. RECALLING HIS RECENT MEETING WITH RABBI SCHINDLER, WHICH MAREI DESCRIBED AS VERY USEFUL (AS DID SCHINDLER), HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH RABBI SCHINDLER AGAIN AND PERHAPS HEADS OF OTHER JEWISH GROUPS. PURPOSE OF MISSION, AS MAREI VIEWS IT, IS NOT TO TRY TO BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON ANYBODY, BUT IN THE CONTEXT OF AN EFFORT TO HELP GET THE PEACE PROCESS STARTED AGAIN.

3. TIMING OF VISIT WOULD BE FROM ABOUT FEBRUARY 5 OR 6 FOR ABOUT A WEEK. ALL HOUSING ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE MADE THROUGH AMBASSADOR GHORBAL AND GOE WOULD DEFRA Y
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EXPENSES. (UP TO NOW, HOWEVER, GHORBAL HAS NOT YET BEEN INFORMED AND WILL NOT BE UNTIL OUR REACTION HAS BEEN ASCERTAINED.)

4. MAREI ASKED THAT I SOUND OUT YOUR VIEW ON SUCH A MISSION. IF YOU THINK IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME, MAREI IS PREPARED TO PROCEED AS INDICATED ABOVE. IF NOT, THE IDEA WOULD BE DROPPED.

5. TODAY'S AKHBAR REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT SADAT HAS ASKED SAYED MAREI TO HEAD EGYPTIAN DELEGATION, INCLUDING BOUTROS GHALI AND ESMET ABDEL MEGUID, TO THE UNITED STATES IN ORDER TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS AND OTHERS TO EXPLAIN EGYPT'S VIEWS ON U.S. RESPONSIBILITY RE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE AT THIS IMPORTANT STAGE. ASKED THIS MORNING WHY THIS HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE PUBLIC BEFORE WASHINGTON'S REACTIONS COULD BE OBTAINED, MAREI APOLOGISED AND SAID HE HAD NOT RELEASED IT. HE THOUGHT THE INITIAL NEWS RELEASE OF HIS AND OTHER EGYPTIAN DELEGATIONS TO BE SENT ABROAD TO EXPLAIN THE EGYPTIAN VIEW HAD PROBABLY COME FROM THE PRESIDENCY.

6. COMMENT: MAREI IS ONE OF THE SHREWDEST AND MOST PRAGMATIC POLITICAL LEADERS IN EGYPT. HE IS PERSONALLY DEEPLY DISTURBED OVER THE BREAKDOWN IN THE ME PEACE PROCESS AND, WHILE OBVIOUSLY GUARDED IN HIS COMMENTS, IS AWARE THAT SADAT'S OCTOBER INTERVIEW WAS A FACTOR IN HEIGHTENING THE RHETORIC. HE BELIEVES THIS IS A TIME FOR QUIET DIPLOMACY AND NO PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY ANY OF THE PARTIES AND IS SEEKING TO PUT THIS ACROSS TO SADAT AS WELL AS OTHERS. HE IS CLOSE TO SADAT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 02510

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

JERUSALEM FOR USDEL

THE PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION HE PROPOSES TO TAKE ALONG ARE ALL HIGHLY PRESENTABLE AND ARTICULATE. IT SEEMS TO ME THERE WOULD BE SOME VALUE TO SUCH A DELEGATION AT THIS TIME IN ORDER TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT SADAT HAS NOT JETTISONED THE PEACE PROCESS AND TO EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR HIS CONCERNS. NO BETTER PERSON COULD BE CHOSEN FOR THIS TYPE OF A MISSION THAN THE PRAGMATIC, ARTICULATE AND EMINENTLY SENSIBLE MAREI. PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHETHER YOU THINK SUCH A MISSION WOULD BE USEFUL AND WHETHER SOME KIND OF A CONGRESSIONAL INVITATION MIGHT BE OBTAINED. WE SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT SADAT APPARENTLY WANTS MAREI AND HIS COLLEAGUES TO GO. IF THE CONGRESS CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY ALSO TO INVITE AN ISRAELI DELEGATION FOR THE SAKE OF BALANCE, I AM SURE THIS WOULD NOT TROUBLE MAREI IN THE SLIGHTEST AND MIGHT EVEN PROVE USEFUL. EILTS

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